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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to test the efficacy of alternative career counseling marketing materials on men's interest in and attitudes toward career counseling, as well as to assess the career planning needs of men with varying levels of gender role conflict. Male undergraduate students (N=123) participated in the study that assessed the impact of two career counseling brochures on their attitudes toward career counseling and their interest in utilizing career counseling services. A second focus involved developing a specific brochure that was intended to appeal to men with high levels of gender role conflict. The men who participated in the study evidenced an increase in the value of such counseling and a decrease in the stigma attached to career counseling. Gender role conflicted men evidenced a high need for self clarity, occupational information, and assistance with indecisiveness. No differences emerged in regard to the differential utility of a gender specific versus a gender neutral brochure. The results are discussed in the context of the literature on male ideology, gender role conflict, and the importance of men's career choice and related success. (Contains 35 references.) (JDM)

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Running head: Men and Career Counseling

# Gender Role Conflict, Attitudes Toward Career Counseling, Career Decision Needs and Perceptions of Career Counseling Advertising Brochures

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Abstract

This investigation analyzed the impact of two different career counseling brochures on men's attitudes toward career counseling and endorsement of interest in utilizing career counseling services. Based on participation on the study, men evidenced an increase in the value and a decrease in the stigma attached to career counseling. Gender role conflicted men evidenced a high need for self-clarity, occupational information, and assistance with indecisiveness. No differences emerged in regard to the differential utility of a gender specific (i.e., targeted toward men) versus a gender neutral brochure. The results are discussed in the context of the literature on male ideology, gender role conflict, and the importance of men's career choice and related success.

Gender Role Conflict, Attitudes Toward Career Counseling, Career Decision Needs and Perceptions of Career Counseling Advertising Brochures

Although the importance of career choice and career-related success in defining a man's sense of self-worth has been well documented (Kelly & Hall, 1992; O'Neil, 1981a; Rochlen, in press; Skovholt, 1990; Skovholt & Morgan, 1981; Zunker, 1994), only recently has research provided information about how men feel about seeking help for career-related concerns. In terms of overall gender differences, men seem to value career counseling at an equal level as women, but have more negative stigma based feelings toward career counseling services (Rochlen, Mohr, & Hargrove, 1991). Research addressing within group differences using the frequently employed gender role conflict paradigm (O'Neil, Good, & Holmes, 1995) has found that men with high levels of gender role conflict seem to value career counseling at an equivalent level as other men, but express higher levels of stigma towards the service (Rochlen & O'Brien, in press). The simultaneous expression of both value and stigma observed among men overall and even more clearly with high gender role conflict men raises the critical question of whether it is possible to decrease stigma levels in an effort to improve attitudes toward career counseling. Hence, the current study's primary focus was to evaluate the effectiveness of two different approaches to the marketing of career counseling services on men's attitudes toward career counseling and interest in a range of career counseling services

Regarding possible sources underlying men's stigma toward career counseling research a logical starting point for researchers should men's awareness (or lack of awareness) of the precise nature of career counseling. Considering the active debate among professionals regarding the

similarity of career counseling to other types of counseling services (Betz & Corning, 1993; Spokane, 1991), it is likely that men may have considerable confusion in terms of what career counseling is and how it could be helpful to them. This is in keeping with the notion that men who have experienced traditional male socialization may have an uniformed or perhaps skewed perception of what various types of counseling involves. In a qualitative study Rochlen and O'Brien (in preparation) found considerable variability in the reasons provided by male responses for why they would seek out this service. Responses ranged from direct assistance with career placement service (provided by 26% of participants) to assistance with academic concerns (provided by 12% of the participants). Further evidence of the uncertainty in how potential consumers envision what career counseling involves emerged in a study initiated by Gallassi, Crace, Martin, James, and Wallace (1992). These researchers found that participants were quite certain about what they preferred to receive from career counseling but were less certain about what to expect from the process. Specifically, participants expressed preference for a small number of career counseling sessions (roughly three sessions) in which testing played a dominant role of thin the work, even as they expected more than three sessions and with an emphasis on the exploration of feelings.

Together these studies suggest that there is considerable variance in what is expected from career counseling and how the services may be able to meet the different career needs of male clients. As a result we felt that providing men with brochures describing these services in an accurate manner would result in overall improvements in attitudes toward career counseling, both in terms of increases and decreases in perceived levels of value and stigma attached to career counseling, respectively.

A second focus of the current project involved developing a specific brochure that was intended to appeal to men with high levels of gender role conflict. According to O'Neil, gender role conflict occurs "when rigid, sexist, or restrictive gender roles result in a restriction of the human potential of the person experiencing the conflict or a restriction of another's potential" (O'Neil et al., 1995, p. 166). Research has consistently demonstrated that men with high levels of gender role conflict also tend to have negative attitudes toward general attitudes toward help-seeking (Blazina & Watkins, 1996; Good, Dell, & Mintz, 1989; Good & Wood, 1995) and heightened stigma levels toward career counseling (Rochlen & O'Brien, in press).

In designing our brochure marketed at men with high levels of gender role conflict we referred to the few studies that investigated the impact of alternative marketing strategies on men with negative attitudes toward general help-seeking literature. Robertson and Fitzgerald (1992) hypothesized that men's reluctance to seeking help could be mitigated through marketing therapy services so as to make them appear more congruent with the more traditional male gender roles. Participants were randomly assigned to two groups, to evaluate different brochures offering psychological counseling services. Half of the brochures described traditional counseling activities (individual and group counseling) while the other described alternative services (classes, videotapes, structured interventions). Pre-tests showed that, compared to the traditional services, the alternative services were perceived as more structured and less emotionally intrusive and would, therefore, be more palatable to men high in traditional masculinity. Indeed, consistent with this expectation, men higher levels of traditional masculinity displayed greater interest in seeking psychological help after being exposed to the non-traditional counseling brochure.

More recently, Blazina & Marks (in press) used a similar brochure format methodology and asked men to respond not only to the traditional and alternative treatments, but also to a third

manipulation, that of a men's support group. They hypothesized that, while the alternative treatment would be more attractive to the traditional treatment, the men's support group treatment, which involves disclosing personal problems and emotional issues to other men, would be least appealing. Results were consistent with these expectations and again, the impact of marketing help-seeking in a way that would not go against important gender specific socialization such as loss of power, and not feeling emotionally vulnerable, were taken into consideration.

Results from the Robertson and Fitzgerald (1992) as well as the Blazina and Marks (in press) studies allowed us to speculate on how to design a career counseling brochure intended to more congruent with the worldview of high gender role conflict men. In addition to the marketing studies, we also borrowed from research suggesting that overall, men preferred a more structured, directive approach to career counseling than a more integrative, affectively oriented career counseling process (Rochlen & O'Brien, in press). Combining these sources led us to test the hypotheses that a gender-specific type of career counseling brochure would yield more positive evaluations and expressions of interest in career counseling among men with higher levels of gender role conflict than a more generalized version of the brochure (see method for more detail on the creation of the brochures).

A final focus of the current project involved investigating the different levels of career decision-making needs among men with varying levels of gender role conflict. Consistent with O'Neil's original theory (O'Neil, 1981; O'Neil et al, 1995) research has steadily been accumulating in support of the negative psychological consequences associated with gender role conflict. For example men with high levels of gender role conflict have been found to have heightened levels of personal strain and stress (Sharpe & Heppner, 1991), depression (Cournoyer & Mahalik, 1995; Good & Mintz, 1990; Good & Wood, 1995; Sharpe & Heppner, 1991), anxiety (Cournoyer &

Mahalik, 1995; Sharpe & Heppner, 1991), low self-esteem (Cournoyer & Mahalik, 1995), and higher rates of alcohol and substance abuse (Blazina & Watkins, 1996). To date, however, there has been no research examining whether high gender role conflict men have any relative deficits in terms of their career planning and career decision making needs. In this way, a skewed or inaccurate perception of career counseling may lead to a greater number of career planning needs, which may be in turn operationalized as a another form of psychological well-being.

Considering the relative importance the men and in particular men with high gender role conflict seem to attribute to career choice and career related success (Rochlen, in press) it seems inherently useful to begin understanding what career counseling related needs may emerge within this subset of the male population. We hypothesized that the negative psychological consequences associated with gender role conflict would extend to challenges emerging in the career planning process. In particular, we felt that men with gender role conflict who demonstrate a lesser willingness to reach out for help and in expressing their emotions may have inherent challenges in negotiating many of the tasks associated with successful career planning

To summarize, our primary objective for the current study was to test the efficacy of alternative career counseling marketing materials on men's interest in and attitudes toward career counseling as well as to assess the career planning needs of men with varying levels of gender role conflict. In regards to our hypotheses, we first considered that many college-aged men might be unaware of the possible benefits and range of services that most college career centers provide. Subsequently, we felt that providing men with brochures describing these services in an accurate manner would result in overall improvements in attitudes toward career counseling, both in perceived value and stigma attributed to career counseling. Secondly, we hypothesized that high gender role conflicted men (opposed to men who score low on gender role conflict) will rate a

brochure targeted at men specifically (opposed to a gender neutral brochure) more positively. This positive evaluation will be apparent in the number of career related services endorsed as wanting to utilize, overall evaluation of an add, and the overall positive emotional response to the intervention. Finally, based on research suggesting that men with high levels of gender role conflict appear to have greater amounts of psychological distress and negative consequences we hypothesized that high gender role conflict men may also have increased amounts of career counseling needs. In particular, we expected high gender role conflict men may have a greater number of career planning needs that remain unresolved including general indecisiveness, lack of self-clarity, and a greater discomfort in their current career status than men with low levels of gender role conflict.

## Method

### Participants

One hundred and twenty three male undergraduate students participated in this study. Participants were recruited through departments of educational psychology (n = 60) and marketing (n = 63) and were given course credit for their involvement. The title of "Men and Marketing" was selected to avoid deterring men who would likely not participate in a counseling-related study. Of the 123 students who signed up for the study, 117 completed all of the instruments in their entirety. The remainder had some incomplete data on one or more of the scales. For these participants we averaged their responses for completed data on the appropriate scales and inserted this number into the dataset.

The ethnicity breakdown of the final participant pool was 74 Caucasian (60.20%), 4 African-American (3.30%), 23 Asian-American (18.0%), 4 Indian American (3.30%), 9 Latino (7.30%), 1 Biracial (.8%), 8 Other (5.7%), and 1 (.8%) who did not respond to the question. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 44 (M = 21.40, SD = 3.07). Involvement in individual and

group career counseling was reported by 25 (20.30%) and 4 (3.30%) of the sample. Eighty-two (66.70%) of the sample reported having discussed career related concerns with an academic advisor.

Brochures

Two career counseling brochures, a generalized control version and one specifically oriented toward men, were developed for this study. Our first objective was to create a generalized version of the career center brochures that accurately and professionally described the typical services of a career center targeted at an undergraduate population. The primary services offered and advertised in this control brochure included individual counseling, career and major tests, career resource library, information interviewing contacts, graduate school planning, workshops and group consulting, internship databases, alumni networking, and faculty contacts (a program whereby students identify current faculty with different professional interests). Based on several meetings with the Career Center Director, Marketing Director (of the career center) and the first author of this paper, a final version of the generalized brochure was constructed. The format of the brochure involved a comic pertaining to the stress involved in making a career decision, a model for career decision-making, a description of the services available, testimonials from students (no names included), and contact/scheduling information.

Our objective with the second brochures was to make two changes to the generalized version. We hypothesized that making the brochure "gender specific" that is aimed directly at male college students and their preferences for more structured, directive types of career interventions (Rochlen and O'Brien, 2001) would have a positive impact on their general reactions to the brochure. Subsequently, in this brochure we had a testimonial section that included quotes from "actual" clients using words emphasizing the structured and logical approach that career counseling

could follow. The quotes were also designed to recognize the stigma that some men may have toward career counseling. Examples included, "I was initially reluctant to use the career center, looking back I'm glad I did." and "My consultant recognized how important career decisions are for me. With his help I made my own decisions" and "The (career center) team helped me to construct an organized plan toward reaching my goals. I am now more confident in my ability to excel in school and in my profession." Finally, this version of the brochure included a "Facts and Myths" section that intended to acknowledge the stigma that is present for many men to seek help. This approach was selected to have the readers carefully consider the possible benefits and costs of seeking or not seeking help if conflicted about their career status. Examples of the "facts" section included, "men often consider their career choice to be the most important decision in their life" and "successful career planning predicts job satisfaction." Examples of the "myths" section included "Being uncertain about your career path is something to keep private" and "men should decide on a career without the help of others."

Measures

Manipulation Check. To provide validation for the content of the two brochures a manipulation check comprised of four scales was designed. All of the items on the scales started with the stem, "The brochure I just reviewed….." Respondents then expressed their agreement with the subsequent phrases on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale. The first scale, entitled Accuracy, was aimed at assessing the overall accuracy of the content of the brochure (e.g., "accurately describes the services of a university career counseling center"). The second scale, entitled Professionalism was aimed at assessing the general appeal/professionalism (e.g. "is aesthetically pleasing"). The third scale entitled gender-specific was aimed at assessing whether the brochure was targeted toward men (e.g., "uses specific phrases and terminology aimed toward

men"). Finally, the fourth scale entitled "stigma" was aimed at assessing the extent the brochure acknowledged the stigma associated with seeking help for men (e.g., "acknowledges the stigma some people have toward seeking help for career counseling"). The scales yielded internal consistency estimates of .73 (3 items), .83 (6 items), .97 (3 items), and .74 (3 items) for the Accuracy, Professionalism, Gender-Specific, and Stigma, respectively. It was expected that the two brochure conditions would have equal levels of perceived accuracy and professionalism but that the masculinized brochure would be perceived as more gender specific and would be identified as acknowledging the stigma many people express toward psychological help-seeking.

Demographic Questionnaire. A demographic questionnaire developed for this study included questions about age, ethnicity, and previous and present career counseling experience.

Career Decision Profile. (CDP; Jones, 1989). The CDP is a 16-item questionnaire used to assess different aspects of career decision status and the career decision needs a client may have. All items are measured on an 8-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (8). Subscale scores are computed by summing the responses from each of the respective scale items. The scales consist of (a) Decidedness (2 items), measuring how decided an individual perceives him- or herself to be; (b) Comfort (2 items), measuring how comfortable an individual is with his or her choice; (c) Self-Clarity (3 items), measuring how clear an individual perceives hi =or herself to be; (d) Knowledge about occupations (3 items), measuring how much need for information the individual has (e) Decisiveness (3 items) measuring how much difficulty the individual perceives him or her to have in making decisions; and Career Importance (3 items) assessing how salient a career decision is to the individual at the current time. Alpha coefficients have ranged from .38 to .85 (Heppner & Hendricks, 1995). Discriminnant validity for the CDP was provided by Phillips (1983), with low correlations between the CDP subscales and SAT scores. We observed internal

consistency estimates between .72 and .87 with all of the subscales of the CDP with the exception of the Career Choice Importance scale (alpha = .54). Because of this low internal consistency, that has also been observed in other studies (Rochlen & O'Brien, in press), we did not employ this scale in the primary analyses.

Attitudes Toward Career Counseling Scale. (ATCCS; Rochlen et al., 1999). The ATCCS is a 16-item questionnaire that assesses attitudes toward career counseling. This scale was comprised of two 8-item subscales: Value of Career Counseling (e.g., "Career counseling is a valuable resource in making a career choice") and Stigma of Career Counseling (e.g., "If I was seeing a career counselor, I would not want anyone to know about it"). In the original scale construction study, responses were made on a 4-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). To increase the variance of scores, the proposed study increased the number of response points on the scale to (1) to (6) while maintaining the same anchor stems. Scale scores were calculated by summing the responses to each item for the respective subscales with high scores reflecting a strong sense of value toward career counseling and a high degree of stigma attached to career counseling for the Value and Stigma scales, respectively. Internal consistency estimates ranged from .80 to .90 over multiple studies for both the Value and Stigma subscales, while a test-retest correlation of .80 was observed over a three-week period for both subscales (Rochlen et al., 1999). In the current study, internal consistency estimates were .85 and .92 for the Value subscale and .79 and .82 for the Stigma subscale.

Evidence for convergent validity of the Value scale has been provided through correlations in the expected directions with measures of general help-seeking attitudes, self-reported likelihood of seeking career counseling, intentions of seeking help for a variety of concerns, and avoidant and spontaneous decision making styles (Rochlen et al., 1999). Convergent validity for the Stigma

scale was provided through correlations in the expected direction with measures assessing general help-seeking attitudes, procrastination in decision-making, closeness with others in relationships, likelihood of utilizing career counseling services, and stigma toward general help-seeking services (Rochlen et al., 1999).

Gender Role Conflict Scale. (GRCS-I; O'Neil et al., 1986). The GRCS-I is a 37-item questionnaire that assesses men's thoughts and feelings concerning gender role behaviors. The measure consists of four patterns of gender role conflict, namely, Success, Power, and Competition; Restrictive Emotionality; Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men; and Conflict Between Work and Family. The Success, Power, and Competition factor relates to persistent worries about personal achievement, competition and striving against others to be the best and most powerful (e.g., "I evaluate other people's value by their level of achievement and success"). The Restrictive Emotionality factor measures difficulty and fear about expressing feelings and putting emotions into expressions (e.g., "Expressing feelings makes me open to attack by other people"). The Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men factor assesses difficulty in sharing feelings and thoughts with other men as well and sharing physical contact with other men (e.g., "Being very personal with other men makes me feel uncomfortable"). Finally, the Conflict Between Work and Family factor measures difficulties balancing work (or school) and family relations (e.g., "My work or school often disrupts other parts of my life- home, health, leisure"). Responses are made on a 6-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). The scales are calculated by summing the individual items with high scores reflecting an expression of gender role conflict within that particular domain. For example, a high score on the Restrictive Emotionality scale reflects conflicted and uncomfortable feelings when expressing emotions. A total GRCS-I score, assessing an overall level of gender role conflict and adherence to traditional models of masculinity,

can be computed by summing the total scores of the four subscales (O'Neil et al., 1995). Test-retest reliability over a four-week period, for all scales, ranged from .72 to .86 (O'Neil et al., 1986). The GRCS-I subscales have been shown to be negatively related to psychological well-being (Blazina & Watkins, 1996; Cournoyer & Mahalik, 1995) and attitudes toward help-seeking (Good et al., 1995). In our study, internal consistency for the total gender role conflict scale was .91. The alpha coefficients for the success/power/competition, restrictive emotionality, restrictive affectionate behavior between men and conflict between work and family were .86, .86, .86, and .91, respectively.

Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The PANAS is a 20 item mood scale designed to measure positive and negative moods. It consists of two subscales: Positive Affect and Negative Affect. Positive Affect subscale measure the degree to which a person feels enthusiastic, active, and alert. High scores reflect a state of high energy, full concentration, and pleasurable engagement. Low scores on the positive mood scale are characterized by sadness and lethargy. Alpha reliabilities for the Positive Affect subscale range from .86 to .90. The Negative Affect subscale measures subjective distress and unpleasurable engagement through a variety of different aversive mood states such as anger, contempt, disgust, nervousness, and fear. Low scores on this scale reflect a state of calmness and serenity. The alpha reliabilities for the Negative Affect subscale range from .84 to .87. (Watson, et. al, 1988). We observed an internal consistency estimate of .90 and .86 for the positive ad negative affect scales, respectively.

The Career Brochure Evaluation Questionnaire (C-BEVA). This scale, developed for the purpose of measuring interest in specific career counseling activities, used an identical format as the Brochure Evaluation Questionnaire (BEVA) that has been used in several studies (Blazina &

Marks, in press; Robertson & Fitzgerald, 1992). The modification to the BEVA involved changes that 17 issues that college students face (e.g., self-confidence, relationship difficulties, depression, etc.) to problems that students might face with regard to career problems (e.g., undecided about a major, in need of an internship, etc.). As with the BEVA, participants were asked to assume they were experiencing each one of the problems on the list and rate on a 1 to 6 scale how willing they would be to seek career counseling. We observed an internal consistency estimate of .88, comparable to what has been observed using the original BEVA in past studies (Blazina & Marks).

Brochure Evaluation Measure. To assess the overall level of appeal the brochures had specifically for men a 5 item scale was constructed specifically for this study. These items contained content that asked participants directly the extent to which they felt the add would be appealing to male students. Sample items include, "I would say this was an effective way of marketing career counseling to men" and "I would recommend using this advertising strategy directed at men in future career counseling materials." Participants rated their level of agreement on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). We determined an internal consistency estimate of .81 for this scale.

Procedure

After granting consent, participants were instructed that they should complete the first packet of questionnaires which included the demographic questionnaire, attitudes toward career counseling scale, gender role conflict scale, and the career decision profile. They were then told to review the brochure that was attached in the middle of the questionnaire packet. After reviewing the brochure they were instructed to complete the second part of the questionnaire packet, which included the BEVA, PANAS, Ad Evaluation Scale, and a second administration of the Attitudes Toward Career Counseling Scale. At the conclusion of the study participant were given a

debriefing statement informing them of the availability of career counseling services on campus and about the overall purpose of the project.

## Results

### Manipulation Check

To assess the validity of the two career counseling brochures, 21 employees career center employees at two large southwestern universities completed evaluative measures after reviewing one of the two brochures. Among the respondents who completed the demographic data were 6 men and 15 women whose average age was 29.76 (SD = 4.32). The ethnic breakdown of the sample was 13 Caucasian (61.9%), 1 African-American (4.8%), 4 Asian-American (19%), 2 Latina (o) (9.5%), and 1 Non-respondent (4.8%). Respondents had been working at a career counseling center for an average of 8.63 (SD = 15.71) years. Asked to estimate the percentage of male clients that they have seen since working at the career center yielded an average percentage of 37.90 (SD = 19.78).

Mean scores for the accuracy and professionalism were 11.38 (out of a possible 15) and 29.07 (out of a possible 35) suggesting that the sample overall considered the brochures to be reasonably accurate and professional in their portrayal of career counseling brochures. A MANOVA was computed with brochure condition (gender specific or gender neutral) as the independent variables and scores on the Accuracy, Professionalism, Gender-Specific, and Stigma scales as the dependent variables. As expected, no main effects for condition emerged for the Accuracy and Professionalism scales. Also as anticipated, main effects for condition emerged for both the Gender-Specific ($F = 390.92$, $p < .001$) and the Stigma ($F = 30.95$, $p < .05$) scales. The two conditions differed from one another in the expected directions on the extent to which they were perceived as being gender specific and acknowledging the stigma levels some men may have

toward career counseling. The lack of main effects that emerged on the accuracy and professionalism scales combined with a review of the descriptive data indicated that the reviewers perceived the two conditions as roughly similar and fairly positive on these two dimensions.

Preliminary Data Analyses

In order to assess whether there were any differences between participants who completed data in the business and educational departments a MANOVA was conducted with location as the independent variable and subscales measuring career indecision, attitudes toward career counseling, gender role conflict, emotional responses to the brochures, evaluation of the ad, and the number of services endorsed by participants. The overall model was not significant ($F = 1.28$), suggesting that the two samples were roughly equivalent on all of the dependent variables of interest. Subsequently, location of data collection was not included in any of the primary analyses and the two samples were collapsed into a larger sample.

Primary Data Analyses

Table 1 reflects the means, standard deviations, ranges, and internal consistency estimates for all of the scales administered in the study.

Attitudes Toward Career Counseling

A paired sample t-test was calculated to test for improvements in attitudes toward career counseling among all participants. This analyses yielded significant results for both the value ($t = -3.75$, $p < .001$) and stigma ($t = -3.60$, $p < .001$) subscales suggesting that participation in the study led to improved responses in the value attributed to career counseling and decreased amounts of stigma toward this service.

Ad Evaluation and Gender Role Conflict Analyses

To examine the preferences of men with high, moderate and low levels of gender role conflict, participants with total gender role conflict scores in the lower and upper 33rd percentiles on the total GRC-I scale were identified. Using these criteria, there were 29, 56 and 30 participants identified in the low (total GRC scores < 122), moderate total GRC scores > 122 and <144) and high (total GRC scores > 144) gender role conflict categories, respectively.

A MANOVA was conducted to evaluate the overall preferences among the two brochures, the influence of gender role conflict on the dependent variables of interest, and whether any significant interactions occurred between gender role conflict level and condition. The independent variables were gender role conflict (low, moderate, and high) and brochure condition (general and gender-specific. The model yielded significance for gender role conflict ($F = 3.06$, $p < .01$) but not for condition ($F = 1.87$). No gender role conflict by condition interactions emerged ($F = .84$). At the univariate level main effects were observed for gender role conflict on the positive PANAS values, ($F = 4.97$, $p < .01$) and the negative PANAS values, ($F = 7.32$, $p < .05$). Tukey's post hoc analyses indicated that high gender role conflict men experienced a greater number of negative emotional responses after a than men with low ($p < .05$) and moderate levels of gender role conflict ($p < .01$). For the PANAS positive scale, univariate analyses indicated that men with high levels of gender role conflict had more positive emotional responses after reviewing the career counseling brochure than men who expressed moderate levels of gender role conflict ($p < .05$).

Gender Role Conflict and Career Decision Profile

A MANOVA with gender role conflict (low, average, and high) as the independent variable and the scales on the Career Decision Profile (Decidedness, Comfort with Career Choice, Need for Career Knowledge, Self-Clarity, and Decisiveness) as the dependent variable was calculated. The

overall model was significant ($F = 3.36$, $p < .001$). Tukey's post hoc univariate analyses yielded significance for the Career Knowledge ($p < .001$), Self-Clarity ($p < .01$), and Decisiveness ($p < .05$) scales. These results suggested that high gender role conflict men expressed a greater need for career information than men with low and moderate levels of gender role conflict, were generally more career indecisive than men with low levels of gender role conflict, and had a greater need for self-understanding and clarification than men with low and moderate levels of gender role conflict men.

## Discussion

The results of the study showed partial support for the proposed hypotheses. In regard to hypothesis 1, participation in the study resulted in improvements in attitudes toward career counseling, both in the perceived value and stigma associated with the service. This finding suggests that providing men with realistic and informative portrayals of career counseling services can have a beneficial impact on men's perceptions of the utility of the service. While the relationship between attitudes and behavioral indices of help-seeking remains moderate at best (Fischer & Farina, 1995; Fischer, Winer, & Abramowitz, 1983) this result is encouraging. Many authors have provided pleas for researchers to extend beyond descriptive and correlational studies on men's help seeking patterns to investigate the probability of improving perceptions of different help-seeking services (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1993; Cournoyer & Mahalik, 1995; O'Neil, Good, & Homes, 1995). Our findings suggest that attitudes toward career counseling services may improve simply by educating men about the types of services that are available and specific guidelines for how one can utilize these services to meet their larger career-oriented objectives. Because of the simplicity of achieving this type of effect, one may speculate that gender role conflicted men lack

vital information about the process and potential benefits of career counseling. Therefore, any information, which may fill the void of not knowing, may be useful.

Contrary to hypothesis 2, we observed no interaction effect with the type of career brochure used in the study and gender role conflict. We were expecting that men with higher levels of gender role conflict may respond more positively (in overall ad evaluation and extent of services endorsed) to an ad oriented specifically toward men. In particular, the two manipulations of acknowledging the stigma many men have toward counseling services and using language that was intended to be more appealing and in line with the common language of more traditional men appeared to have equal but not a superior impact on more traditional men.

These preliminary findings suggest that orienting brochures specifically toward men may not necessarily have any beneficial aspects above an beyond a more gender-neutral marketing strategy. However, it might be that our specific manipulations, namely discussing the stigma men have toward counseling services and using words that were designed to be more consistent with a traditional male mindset simply were not strong enough to have the desired effect, or alternatively, perhaps they were too strong. Considering the importance men attribute to career choice and related success (Dubois & Marino, 1986; Zunker, 1994) there is potential for career issues to be emotionally charged material. Subsequently, coming into contact with many of the fears that many men face in their career exploration may not neutralize the situation but rather exacerbate it, ultimately leading to the opposite of the desired effect. In some ways, facing anxieties and uncertainties about one's career choices, successes, and potential failures, could be considered as a gender specific challenge for some men

This interpretation would also make sense in the context of the gender role conflicted aspects of male ideology. As noted in the introduction, numerous theorists have suggested that

psychotherapy help-seeking goes contrary to notions of the traditional male culture. It should be no surprise that these reactions could be extended to career counseling, as many authors have noted that the "line" between career and personal concerns and responsibilities is negligible (Blustein, 1987; Spokane, 1991; Swanson, 1995 ). Perhaps what makes this situation particularly difficult for some men is that they are being asked to participate in a process that not only goes against the grain of traditional male socialization but also must face issues that are central to being a man. Ideas for future advertising strategies may bare these dynamics in mind, and gauge he level of potential reactivity to the topic. This may include pre and post measures of anxiety about career concerns. In addition, future research in this area may want to directly inquire participants as the extent to which they found the ad to be personally challenging and whether it increased their anxiety about their short- or long- term career goals.

An additional clinical application emerges from our findings pertaining to hypothesis 3, which considers the unique career decision making needs of men with different levels of gender role conflict. No differences emerged with regard to the degree of decidedness or comfort with their career choice, high gender role conflict men expressed a greater need for occupational information, need for self-clarity, and general indecisiveness (i.e., not directly pertaining to career choice). Again, we must place these finding in the context of male ideology. As a number of theorists suggest (David & Brannon, 1976; Pollack, 1995; Pollack, 1999) men are raised with certain expectations about being self-reliant islands unto themselves. Again, this should be expected to extend to notions of career decisions where men may feel compelled to solve these dilemmas on their own. If this is the case, then gender role conflicted men may feel an extra burden to gather information and make these decisions on their own without appropriate use of trained professional

help. This, may potentially lead to both less general self-clarity and accurate information about their own career choice, and consequently leave them struggling with general feelings of indecisiveness.

In explaining the higher than expected levels of comfort with career choice, perhaps, these same men may express premature foreclosure on their career choice without sufficient researching the types of occupations and career choices being pursued. Importantly, when working either in the context of emotional or career counseling with men, clinicians should again be aware that these same type of men may have insecurities in the area of their career development while simultaneously saying that they are decided and comfortable with their career choice.

Further, support of hypotheses 3, and the special career needs of men, are that high gender role conflicted men reacted both positively and negatively to the gender specific brochures. This would make sense in the context that this situation of facing career worries and anxieties may simultaneously stir mixed and some what contradictory reactions. This is in keeping with what Good & Dell (1990) suggested in terms of the double-bind men face when considering help-seeking. It also fits with Blazina (2000) who found a relationship between the use of psychological splitting, that is making artificially dichotomies or keeping contradictory information apart, and increases in gender role conflict. What the clinician needs to be aware of is that the gender role conflicted man may not wish to divulge this information or even be aware of it. Further, a part of the corrective emotional experience for many gender role conflicted men may be to have their counselor help them process, evaluate, and normalize their positive and negative (or excitatory and inhibitory) reactions may surface as a result of seriously reflecting on one's career decision making status.

Considering the critical connection between career choice and related success that many traditional men seems to express (Rochlen, in press; Zunker, 1994), exploring more creative options

for how to most effectively handle career related concerns for traditional men appears to be critical. Moreover, it seems important for further marketing efforts to directly utilize the information yielded in this study to try to further enhance interest in career counseling for a range of men. For example, advertisements for career counseling may want to ask potential consumers if they have trouble making decisions, soliciting information on careers, or understanding how their long term career goals in with their current career goals and objectives.

There are several noteworthy limitations of this study. First, our sample size may have limited our ability to find an effect of the brochure condition. While no significant differences emerged, there was some indication that overall men actually preferred the generalized condition, suggestive that a gender-specific counseling approach may not be as effective as the brochure designed specifically to be appealing to men. In addition, this sample also consisted of predominantly Euro-American, traditionally aged college students. Thus, the findings may not be applicable to other groups. Finally, another of the limitations of this study is the analogue nature of the research. That is, the participants were asked to respond to how they perceive being in one of the two different treatment conditions, rather than actually experiencing them. It may well be that their attitudes and reactions to the career modalities may be different if they were actually exposed to the treatment conditions. With that said, part of the dilemma with gender role conflicted men is that they are reluctant to participate in treatment. Therefore, preliminary or baseline information on these men's reactions to treatment possibilities is a very helpful beginning point.

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Table 1

Scale Total Means, Standard Deviations, Ranges, and Alpha Coefficients for all variables

| Scale | Mean | SD | Range | Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attitudes Toward Career Counseling | | | | |
| Value - Pre | 18.49 | 3.70 | 9 - 24 | .85 |
| Value – Post | 19.21 | 3.68 | 6 – 24 | .92 |
| Stigma - Pre | 5.37 | 3.47 | 0 - 14 | .79 |
| Stigma – Post | 4.47 | 3.80 | 0 – 17 | .89 |
| Gender Role Conflict – Total Score | 134.02 | 25.53 | 82 – 201 | .91 |
| Success, Power and Competition | 54.74 | 9.90 | 28 - 78 | .86 |
| Restrictive Emotionality | 29.63 | 9.64 | 10 - 56 | .86 |
| RABBM | 22.98 | 8.58 | 8 - 47 | .86 |
| Conflict Between Work and Family | 21.37 | 6.55 | 8 - 46 | .91 |
| Career Decision Scale | | | | |
| Career Decidedness | 12.52 | 3.21 | 4 - 16 | .77 |
| Comfort With Career Choice | 9.89 | 3.89 | 2 - 16 | .78 |
| Self-Clarity | 13.62 | 6.23 | 3 – 24 | .87 |
| Knowledge | 12.95 | 5.30 | 3 – 24 | .72 |
| Decisiveness | 9.89 | 5.11 | 3 – 24 | .82 |
| PANAS – Negative Affect | 16.30 | 5.86 | 10– 34 | .86 |
| PANAS – Positive Affect | 30.67 | 7.76 | 10 – 48 | .90 |
| Interest in Ad Measure | 17.73 | 2.83 | 9 – 24 | .91 |
| C – BEVA | 45.52 | 9.16 | 20 – 66 | .88 |

Note. N = 123. SPC = Success, Power, and Competition subscale of GRCS; RABBM = Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men subscale of GRCS; PANAS = Positive and Negative Affect Schedule; C-BEVA = Career Brochure Evaluation Questionnaire.